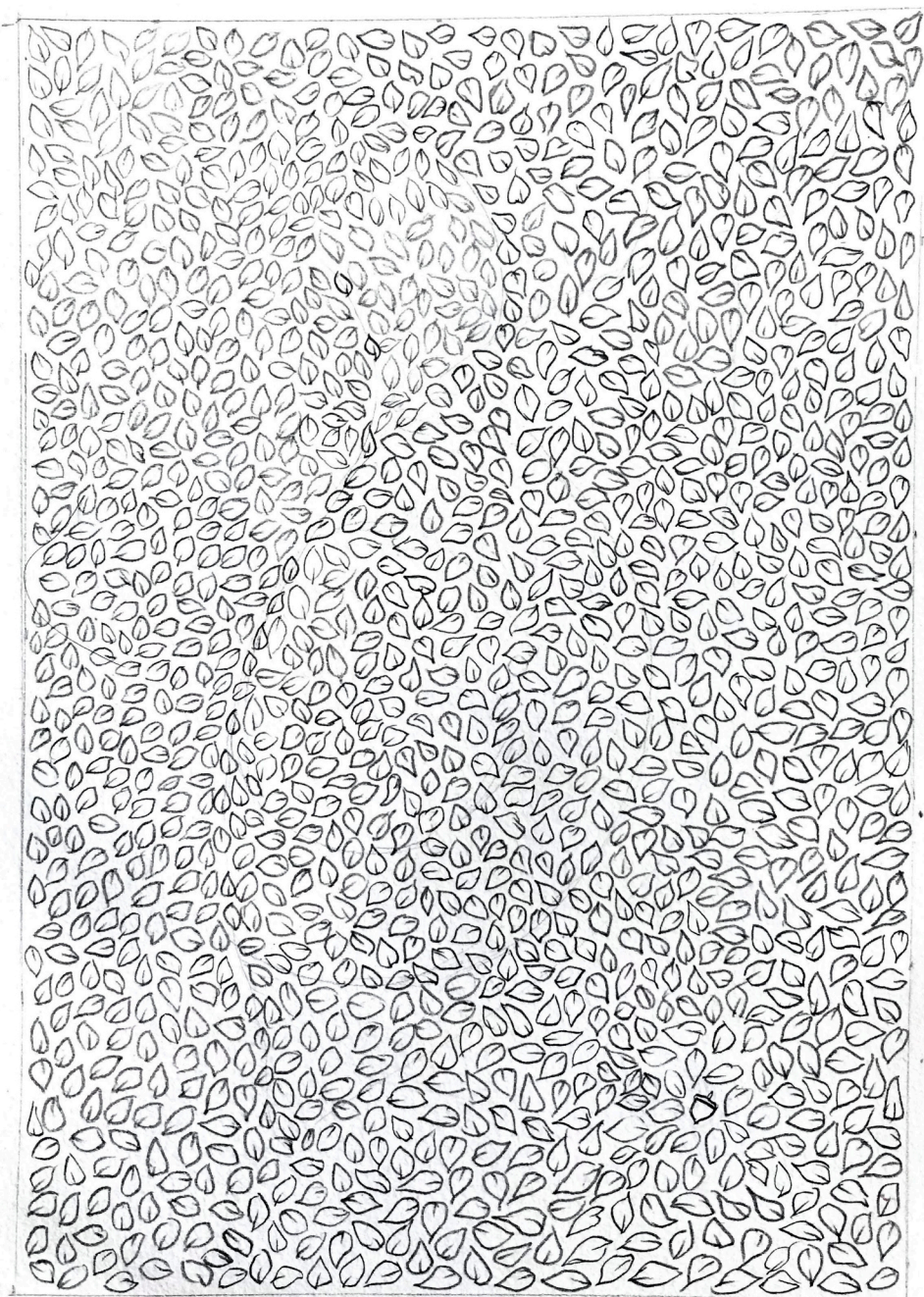


REPEAT

REPEAT

REPEAT



lora wanta

art_irl [3]

"repeat"

summer /

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r chou

m eppes

h hardy [p. 6]

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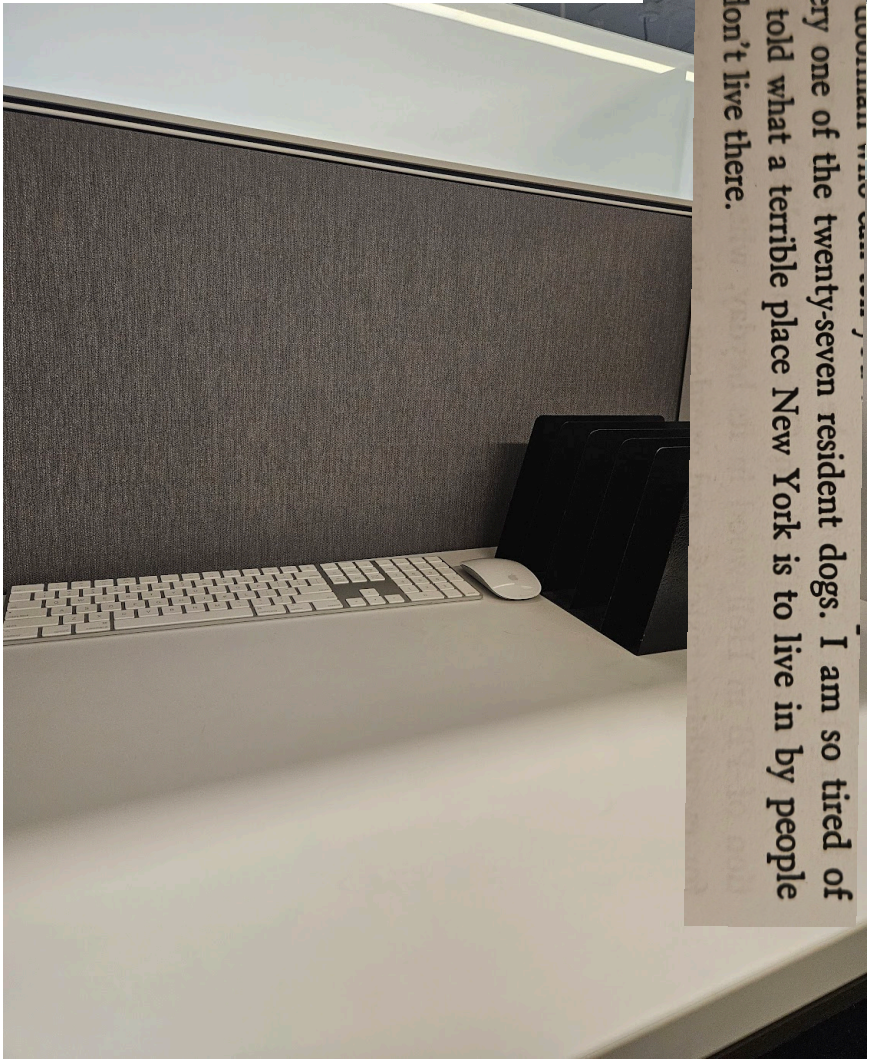
j vincent

l wanta [p. 1]

Once developed, art habits are deep-seated, reliable, helpful, and convenient. Moreover, habits are stylistically important. In a sense, habits *are* style. The unconsidered gesture, the repeated phrasing, the automatic selection, the characteristic reaction to subject matter and materials—these are the very things we refer to as style. Lots of people, artists included, consider this a virtue. Viewed closely, however, style is not a virtue, it is an inevitability—the inescapable result of doing anything more than a few times. The habitual gestures of the artist appear throughout any body of work developed enough to be called a body of work. Style is not an aspect of good work, it is an aspect of *all* work. Style is the natural consequence of habit.

Let AI Write My Message

Write My Own



The Empire State Building had bit of fun
after the quake.

"I AM FINE," the building posted on X.

(r)ResOLuTE

TORI SIMPSON

“I’m going to have an awesome day,” I resolutely repeat after Adrienne while finishing up a morning yoga video—I watch these videos so often I’m barely even embarrassed anymore to say that to a TV screen in an empty room. Unfortunately, that’s one of the few things that doesn’t constantly repeat in my head (though that’s not to say I don’t have a lot of awesome days). What does repeat is the tiny and constant rituals/movements/habits I do that I’ve somehow equated with determining each day’s outcome.

For example, I don’t recall when I first started wearing two pairs of socks whenever I wear shoes that need them, but now if I don’t keep that up my brain has me convinced that some awful, terrible thing(s) will happen. Or if the number my alarm ends with is not a “7” (6:17 am is my personal favorite) chaos will ensue. There are, of course, less annoying impulses I must do, such as having to say goodbye to my beloved stuffed animals every time I leave my apartment. I like to think that particular habit exists for wholesome reasons only.

Repetition helps me move through the world much more comfortably and confidently than I would otherwise. Before being diagnosed with OCD in college (a tad late, as my sister often lovingly says she has no idea how we didn’t realize this earlier), I was a bundle of anxiety, impatience, and rigidity. I still can be (just ask my sister), but learning that about myself truly changed my life and my understanding of it.

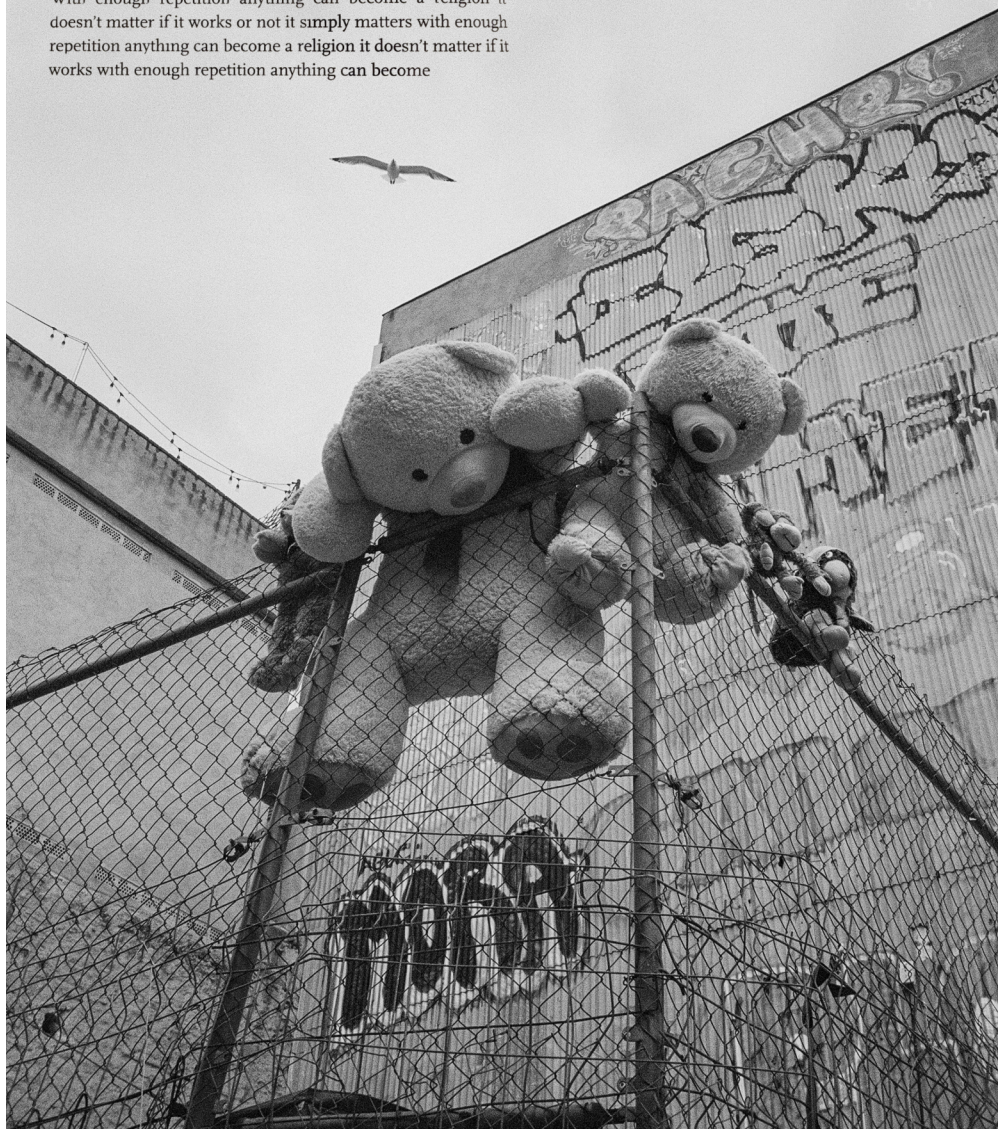
Even before being officially diagnosed, it wasn’t all bad. It certainly helped me excel in school and sports—there’s nothing like being a perfectionist with OCD participating in things where you can literally quantify your accomplishments, whether in grades achieved or goals scored. And an oldest sibling on top of that? Wow, so much OCD-satisfying potential there. It can, has, and does spiral into dangerous ways of thinking about self-worth and what life is “about,” but knowing this about myself enables me to recognize more fully where my thought-process is coming from and how to self-correct when possible. I can now recognize the unhealthy repetitions from the neutral/healthy ones.

At the risk of sounding exactly like the million tacky sayings plastered on school counselors' walls everywhere (even though I'd argue that the school system in this country doesn't practice what those posters preach), I've realized that life is not about accomplishments, being perfect, or trying to repeat everything I can think of to get the same desired result that I had on a previous good day; that realization has made me kinder to myself, and to others.

Even though I can't help it a lot of the time, there are some, even many, repetitions that are worth it. So, repeat after me...



With enough repetition anything can become a religion it
doesn't matter if it works or not it simply matters with enough
repetition anything can become a religion it doesn't matter if it
works with enough repetition anything can become



heather hardy

FALse **Su**N

each morning, i wake in his glory,
he blinds me with his sweet embrace.
i smile at him and stretch out limbs,
his arms keep me under his space.
but as the time keeps on passing,
my roots begin to grow limp.
with each waking day of staying the same,
i crave water far more than his kiss.
i shrivel as if it is winter,
his light can not quench my thirst.
with the turn of the months, my buds never bloom.
yet it isn't my soil that's cursed.
so many days of trusting his rays,
praying i wasn't so dumb.
but then i learned he was only a lamp,
pretending to be the sun.





Bebé

JAMIE VINCENT

Back when he was el Bebé, at another end of the world, he melted the cornea off the eyeball of a corpse. Now it's an anecdote he tells at dinner parties and it's difficult, in his waking hours, to conjure the panic of that moment, the rush of dread and awe when he realized that the small flame from the match had drawn too close to the pupil—already dead, failing to contract in the light. That dead globe of darkness within the globe of the eyeball within the tremulous globe of light from the flame of the match burning down to his thumb and index in the darkness of that farmhouse awash in night and poverty. But again, it's the image he can conjure, not the feeling. Comfortable in his house in Colombe with the garden and the dog and the children and the tenured position at l'Institut Pasteur, the fear is reserved for his dreams.

In his dreams only, now, is he Bebé, and now Bebé is only a globe of fear, a hard kernel somewhere in his mind, or more of a nut that cracks open with stress. The nightmares have come and gone and come again over the years, the dawns of cold sweat beside his softly snoring wife. Not always does the eyeball make its appearance; when it does, it's not the image of the cornea frosting over like burnt plastic behind the tiny sulfur-induced flame that inspires terror. The faint odor of scorched eyelashes was no different than that of singed hair. Always it's what cannot be seen that steals his breath and his peace. In the shadows of that ranch-house—really more of a shanty—in a God-fucked corner of the province of Santa Fe lurk the dead woman's family, waiting with silent hope that is not to be confused with trust in the young doctor who leans over the silver-haired corpse with a lit match to check for the pupillary reflex. The fact that Bebé has seen neither pistol nor rifle since entering the home does not mean that neither exists. That the dead woman's sons and grandsons treat him with the sort of wary respect one would treat a priest from a foreigner's religion does not mean that they will still bow their heads when his magic tricks don't work. When the cornea burns and the light from the flame flashes green off the eyeball's ruined surface, Bebé's instinct is to flick his wrist so that the fire extinguishes. He hears or perhaps merely senses the intake of breath from the onlookers. He makes a show of swearing softly and fumbling with his matches in the semi-darkness of the gas lamp held by a hard-looking girl in the corner, all while swiping a finger down over

the lid of the melted eye. His trembling hands quickly settle and he lights a new match with a sizzle. He places two fingers on the cold, papery flesh above the dead woman's carotid—he already took the pulse at the wrist before checking the pupil, but now he has to give some sort of performance—and he nods.

"She's alive," he says, looking into the shadowy faces of the men. "But I need to take her to the clinic now."

In his dreams it's actually rarely the eyeball. In the sterile peace of the clinic he studied the peeling layers of translucent, corneal flesh—like that of a boiled egg—with interest and curiosity. The terror is never matched with an image. The worst nightmares end with blackness and a staticky roar that fills his ears like sand, following him into the cool bedroom in Colombe, drowning the purring of his wife. Images are only the precursor to that unspeakable horror. But sometimes the eyeball will appear as a harbinger of dread to come. The pupil again will float in its coffee-bowl of iris, stained blue with age and milky with cataract. Again the delicate fairy-skin of the cornea will crystallize and crinkle beneath the force of the flame. But then, beneath the melted flesh, the pupil will contract, and *Bebé*—again, then, he'll be *Bebé*—will realize the brain stem is alive.

It is not then that the dead woman's sons and grandsons—how many of them were there, anyway, in the corners of that tiny house—will give chase through the night with their guns that exist without needing to be seen. Dreams rarely unfold with such logic. More often *Bebé* will realize that he has scorched the eyeball of a living patient in a God-fucked corner of rural Santa Fe right before he enters the apartment of a friend in Buenos Aires. His hand on the doorknob will send the fear through his wrist like an electric zap, and he will know. He will enter the apartment of the friend with whom he is hiding and he will see it. Sometimes it is a vase moved from the bookshelf to the coffee table. Sometimes the window will be open on a rainy day when, clearly, neither he nor his friend would have left it open. Sometimes they will have cleaned the ashtray. Regardless, he will know that they have been there and that he is as good as dead, and sometimes his wife will wake from the screaming.

When the nightmares were at their worst, some years before, his wife had insisted that he speak with a psychoanalyst. He begrudgingly attended one session. The analyst was unduly interested in the melting eyeball. She

seemed to imply it was a metaphor, or a symbol, and he politely informed her that his life was not literature. He asked her what good it was to speak of terror, of running for one's life from the government, with a girl who grew up in Neuilly sur Seine. Then he interrupted her answer to ask what she knew of Argentinian politics. She looked like she was about to cry. He stood from the sofa and left her office and never came back.

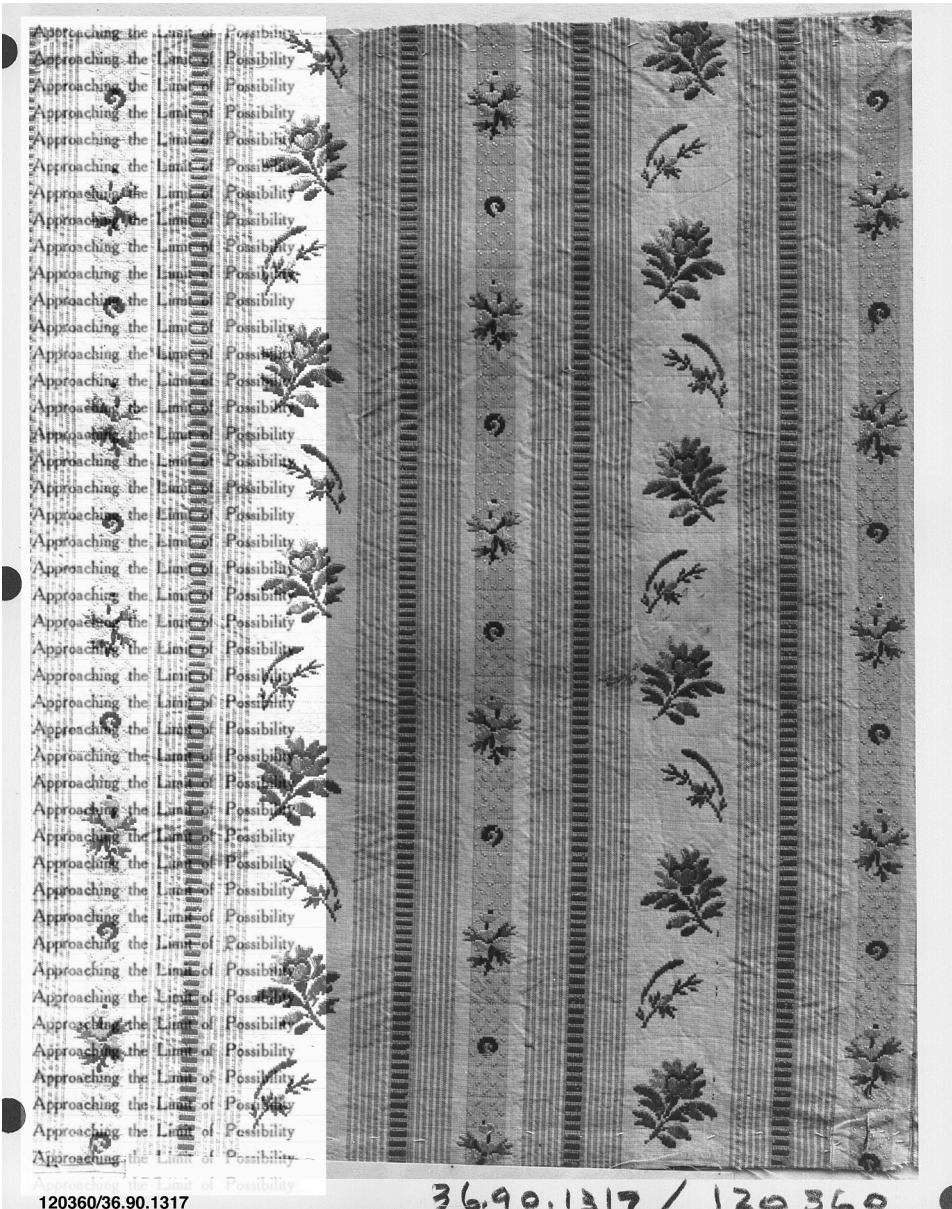
Better to sit with Osvaldo over a finger of whiskey and be understood without having to say a thing. Osvaldo is the one who calls him one afternoon with the news of Videla's life imprisonment. They speak briefly, without emotion, and he then lays the phone in its cradle and goes to throw a ball for the dog in the garden.

He thinks that the nightmares might now be put away. But, if anything, they increase in both frequency and intensity. Foreshadowed by the eyeball or not, at night he flees the angry peasant sons of a dead woman through the labyrinthine alleyways of Rosario or Buenos Aires, while in the twilit expanse of the pampas—wide and shifting as the sea—in view of the golden twinkle of a gas lamp in the window of a tiny house, he suddenly becomes aware that he is being followed.

In the world section of the local paper there is one small, grainy photo of Videla at the trial. He cuts out the photo with a pair of kitchen scissors, trimming white from the edges with an attention that could be mistaken as love. He keeps it in the top drawer of his desk and studies it daily. The mustache is comprised of two white specks that end up looking something like fangs above the shadowed mouth. The eyes are dark holes. He studies the photo to the point of abstraction, and thinks of nothing, and at dawn he wakes screaming beside his wife.

The final time he melts the cornea of the old woman's eyeball, he knows things will be different because she sits up in bed. Her hair is now white and glowing as clouds, and she looks at him with one eye flashing iridescent in the light of his match, like that of an animal. Go, she tells him, and he runs from her many sons. They chase him down Callao, down Córdoba, and onto Talcahuano, but he reaches the doors of the supreme courthouse before they can grab him. Once inside, he is escorted before the judge, who asks, What do you have to say for yourself? And he tells the entire story, proving his innocence. I'm a doctor, he tells the judge. I'm only a doctor.

When he opens his eyes, it is just past dawn in the bedroom in Colombe. There is a crack of white light at the curtained window; his wife is sleeping on her side, and he watches until her ribcage softly rises with air.



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Some Examples of His-



Some-
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Some Examples of His-



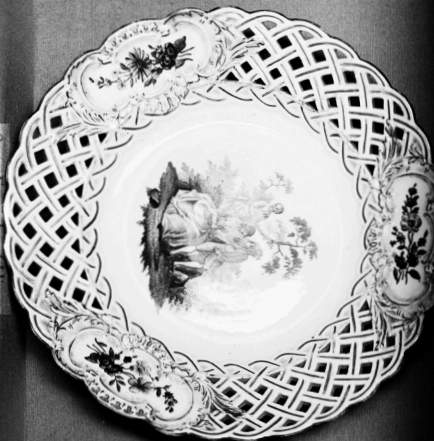
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Some Examples of His-



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Some Examples of His-



Some Examples of His-



Some Examples of His-

ROOMS

RACHEL CHOU

The first time I found the room I was in year two of my abusive marriage. In a fury I had driven to the nearest motel and booked a stay for a week. I lay on the brown patterned bedspread and the flat pillows and ate dried foods. The ceiling was a blank canvas for my neuroticisms—imagining a life without Kyle, flitting through my blank memory for answers. But on the third day, it was there in the enclave between the door to my bedroom and the door to my bathroom—a room that I swore wasn't there before.

Should I go in? I asked myself for a while. I had studied the exterior of the door so well I memorized every crack and chip of its white paint. I went to sleep that night dreaming I had opened it and gone in. I knew something would be there. A woman with scrawly unkempt gray and black hair, a sunken wrinkled face was on the other side. At first I thought she might be an older me, until she spoke and a low growl prickled my ears. Her sunken eyes were pitch black. She wrapped her bony fingers around mine and pulled me inside. She wrapped her legs around me and assaulted me. I tried to scream but my repeated cries were suffocated inside my throat. I woke up in a sweat at 3:42 a. m.

The next morning, I turned the knob. I don't know why I didn't go downstairs to report the strange appearance in my room. Maybe I didn't want to bother anyone, or didn't want them to think I was crazy. I feel powerful sometimes when I'm on my period, and a surge of energy tapped in me.

The room opened up to a large bedroom. The walls were light, peachy. The air felt sticky. It felt unsettling. Dark floral bed dressings draped over the king sized bed but I was too afraid to touch it, like something might jump out at me if I did. There was a crimson walled bathroom, with an enormous white porcelain bathtub. I was drawn to the closet—I walked in, and closed the wooden paneled doors. Suddenly, the doors started closing in on me, pushing me, swallowing me whole—I tasted the wooden scent of cedar and the metal taste of my own blood, I cried—I pushed myself out, fled back into my room, closed the door, latched it shut.

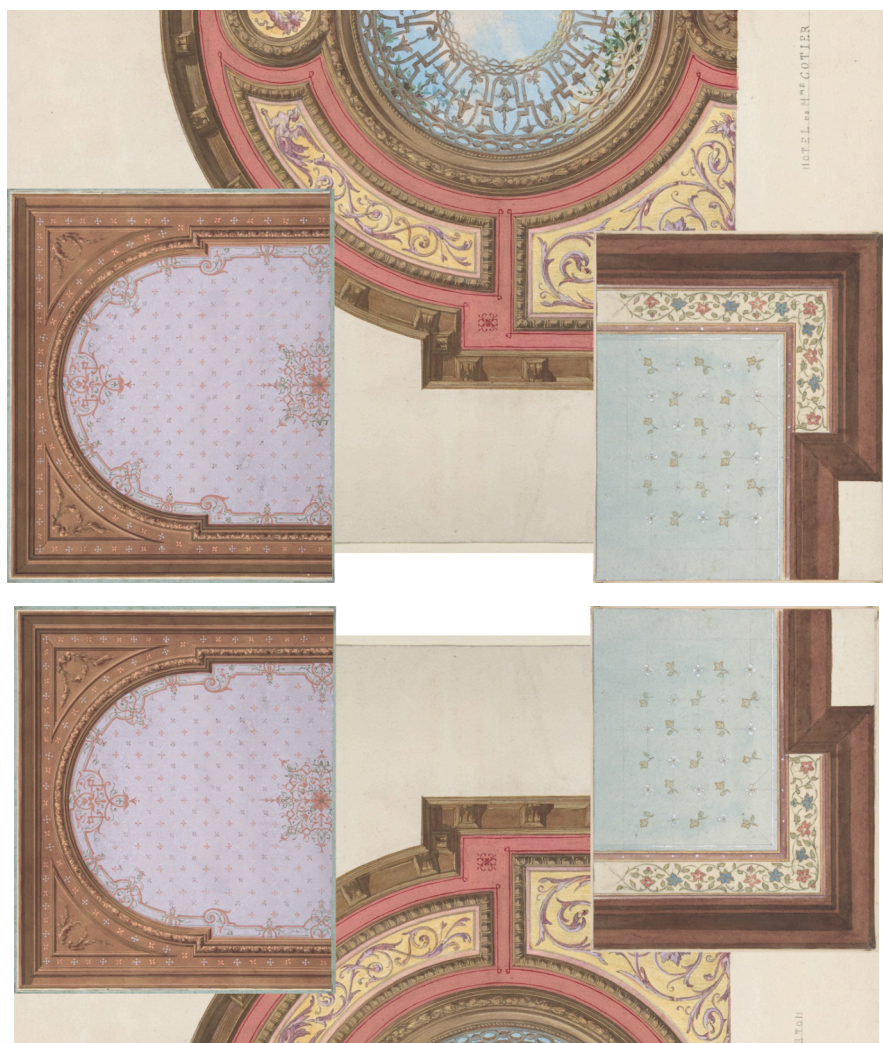
I went downstairs to talk to someone.

“Oh yeah, that’s always been there.” The man at the counter pushed back wisps of his graying hair under his baseball cap. “Since I was a kid. We know about it.”

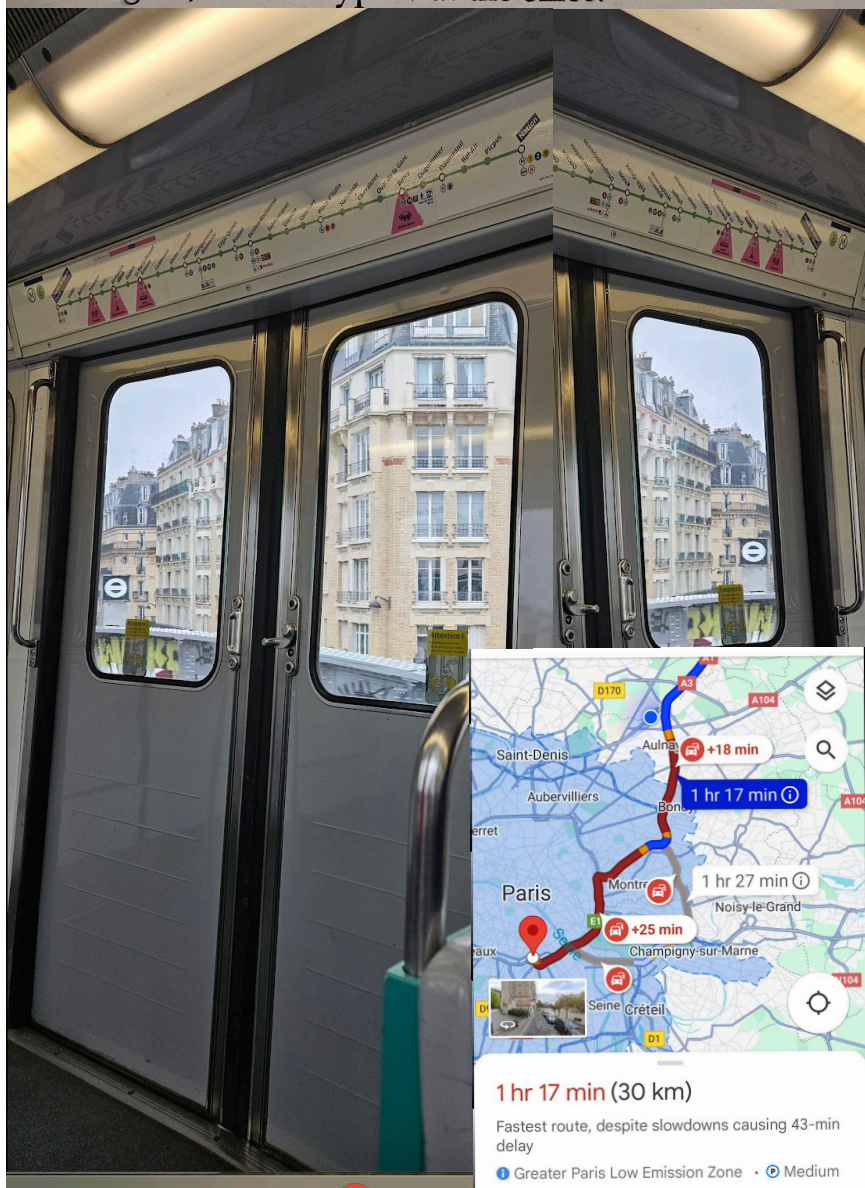
“So you’re not going to do anything about the... ghosts?” I was agitated at his nonchalance.

“It costs a lot of money to just discard haunted rooms. Money you can assume we’re not making right now.” He gestures to the dusty motel lobby. I look at the yellow, withering plant in the corner. He sighs.

I would go back. Every year for twelve years, back to the same motel, the same room. I would sit in the closet, swallowed up whole, waiting, for the woman in my dreams.



All this was far more complicated than it had seemed at first. Never until his return from Venice had he realized that he was the prisoner of a routine and that for twenty-four hours a day his acts and gestures were observed either by his wife and children or by his boss, colleagues, and the typists at the office.



THE SHIRLEYS

MARIAH EPPES

They emerged from the city itself. You could either be for or against. I hid as long as I could in my parents' house, until they came to the door and ordered me out. I complied, but only to save my life.

They took us downtown. We were escorted into an abandoned casino and separated into abandoned conference rooms. The room I entered had only women. Some of them were taking the circumstances better than others. But no one could believe it: that this was an alien invasion.

"Where are the aliens?" I asked a woman, who wasn't crying.

"I don't know," she said. "They made me remove my earrings."

"Me too," I said.

"My cartilage wasn't even pierced," she said. "But I knew if I didn't take it out, I'd just keep wanting it and wanting it."

Our captors, the aliens' human co-conspirators, kept guard by the door. Should I run away? I wondered. Should I ingratiate myself? Before I could decide, a new person arrived—parting the captors with a wave of her hand.

She said her name was Shirley. She was a human woman. She had medium-length dyed blonde hair and taut pale facial skin that could only be achieved at her age by plastic surgery. She was of slight build and short stature. Her large eyes, made up with glittery shadow and bold liner, were the most prominent feature of her face.

She also wore a pair of glasses with blue frames. She told us not to be afraid.

"We take care of each other," she said. "The new world will be better than the old one."

Our days were spent building an inventory of simple tools for the aliens. We did not see the aliens, but they provided the parts, and we assembled the tools in great quantities. I could not decipher the tools' use and the materials were unfamiliar. A soft metal arm with fingers like flexible cigarettes. A round object with appendages like cilia, that had to be attached carefully one-by-one with tweezers.

Shirley told us we had a special responsibility.

"You won't be forced to do anything," Shirley said. "But you might want to have a baby." Shirley smiled. "One day, we'll have a school here."

Shirley had a husband. He sometimes visited us while we worked. He looked waxy; his skin polished, his teeth whitened beyond a natural sheen, his eyebrows sculpted in straight edges. His hair was gray and lying naturally, no pomade or grease.

The woman without earrings and I sat next to each other every day, making tools. Shirley's husband stretched his waxy face into smiles. The woman without earrings smiled back at him.

No one was coming to save us.

*

Shirley gave us all blue glasses, just like hers.

"The aliens provided the technology, but it was a design of my own," she said.

The glasses healed my nearsightedness. Not just while I wore them—permanently. Other women reported that the glasses had healed various ailments and injuries.

"These will help us see each other better," Shirley said.

After the glasses, the women became more amenable. I heard some of them speculating about the future. I heard some of them speculating about a school.

*

A rectangular, ambulatory device about the size of a shoebox, equipped with a shovel. The woman without earrings and I made five each. By that time, we had constructed at least twelve different types of tool. We began to have private meetings with Shirley to determine our potential.

“What did you do in the old world?” Shirley asked me.

“I was an entertainer,” I said. “Like juggling. Balloons. For kids’ birthday parties.”

“So juggle something,” said Shirley.

I cast my eyes over the available objects. Shirley’s table was scattered with miscellany but nothing I could use.

“I don’t have the balls,” I said.

“Clearly,” said Shirley.

I began to laugh.

*

Shirley invited me into her private rooms more and more often. I wondered if she was pumping me for information about the woman without earrings. Lately, the woman without earrings had been acting inconsistently. She was not as diligent in tool-making as the rest of us had become. We wore our blue glasses every day, but sometimes I noticed the woman without earrings wearing them on her head, or hanging them from her shirt collar.

I didn’t mind telling Shirley what I saw, because she gave me information too.

Shirley said we needed to do something about her husband. He was in charge of the men, but it wasn’t going well. The men couldn’t complete even half of the tools that we made in comparable amounts of time. The aliens needed to know about this crucial deficit. Shirley wanted the aliens to see who their true ambassador was.

“I want a different world, just like they do,” she said.

I was entertaining, so I could help in this matter. Shirley’s husband loved his sycophants. Exploiting this flaw would be simple, Shirley said, and the rest would be very humane; better for him, really.

“But first,” Shirley said. “Can you tell me where that woman goes at night?”

*

A trial was held for the woman without earrings. Everyone was angry with her for one reason or another. Shirley let each woman in the group air grievances until the room was humid with anger. The woman herself was cold and implacable. She did not look at me. She knew I was the one who had betrayed her—after sitting next to her for months, cultivating her trust, I had told Shirley everything. What did she expect? We could not get to Shirley’s husband otherwise.

“There’s nothing out there. Would you be so cruel?” the woman without earrings said to Shirley.

“I can’t let your actions go unpunished,” Shirley said. “We have precedents to set.”

Finally, Shirley took back the woman’s pair of blue glasses. And so the woman without earrings left with nothing, entered the world of nothing.

“She would have made a terrible mother,” Shirley said.

*

The women were happy and productive. Output of tools was high. They worked to meet their potential. Now it was my turn.

Shirley’s husband was not difficult to talk to. He wanted attention, especially after the woman without earrings was expelled. The waxy man complained that the aliens had chosen them both as human liaisons, but Shirley overstepped her duties. He derisively referred to the women as the Shirleys. Wearing our glasses and recreating ourselves in his wife’s image. He derided us as he touched my hair and said *but not you, of course, you’re*

different. He must have said the same thing to the woman without earrings—except he was right about her.

I wanted attention too. Shirley and her husband doubled my dosage of that particular drug. Shirley and I eventually doubled her husband's dosage, of another kind: to make sure it would kill him.

*

The death of Shirley's husband sent the men into confusion and blind rage. The casino where we had lived in relative harmony erupted in violence. Shirley said it was okay, this didn't matter, it was time to appeal to the aliens. She had earned her place, and because I was so loyal, the two of us would have new roles.

"You won't make any more tools," Shirley told me. "You will be much more than that now."

Shirley and I ran. I saw men and women bludgeoning each other with the contraptions we had built for the aliens. No one knew how to use them. We ran to our escape: a van Shirley had kept secret for this moment.

I had not been outside the casino in nearly a year. The ruins of the landscape did not remind me of the city I remembered. To me there had never been anything but these blue glasses, the daily quota of simple machinery, and Shirley. Even the woman without earrings was a vague memory. Her cartilage had not even been pierced. What did she say? She let the earring go, because she would have kept wanting it and wanting it. Shirley drove recklessly down the empty boulevard. At the same moment, we saw two men clinging to the back of the van in the rear view mirror. She shrieked like a child, we scraped the concrete median, and she lost control.

We spun. I was still thinking about the woman without earrings. I suddenly understood why she gave up the fakes. She wanted to be struck through completely, a needle out the other side, and it was too much to want in a world like this. We crashed into a streetlight.

Dazed, I forced open the passenger door and collapsed on the asphalt. I crawled as far from the scene as I could, and when I was brave enough, looked back.

The men chasing us were nowhere to be found. I watched Shirley emerge from the van. She was ragged and beaming. She even stood up and went on ahead of me, searching the sky. She raised her arms, bruised and bleeding, and opened them in supplication. Gratified, victorious. Her dyed hair blew in the hot wind. I was proud.

Then, a flash of light. I could not make sense of it. A flash of light, and Shirley was gone. Or, not gone: degraded. Disintegrated. A heap of ash and soot was left in her place. The top layer of ash was scattered by the hot wind.

Silence, except for the sound of nearby burning. My injuries began to scream. I had complied, but only to save my life. What now? I looked up at the sky. Should I run away? Should I ingratiate myself?





made with **affinity publisher 2** [a subscription-free alternative to indesign]

image sources:

plate (one of six), manufactory meissen manufactory, german late 19th century / metropolitan museum of art

five hearts, from the playing cards series (N84), issued by w. duke, sons & co., american, 1888 / metropolitan museum of art

"piece," silk, french 18th century / metropolitan museum of art

designs for ceiling, hotel cottier [1879]; design for ceiling, hotel hope [1867], jules-edmond-charles lachaise & eugene-pierre gourdet / metropolitan museum of art

life magazine, 10/19/1911

life magazine, 10/26/1911

life magazine, 11/02/1911

life magazine, 12/04/1897

good housekeeping, 1/1912

text sources:

p. 2 / *art and fear* by david bayles + ted orland

p. 3 / *the duchess of bloomsbury street* by helene hanff

p. 6 / *there's always this year: on basketball and ascension* by hanif abdurraqib

p. 16 / *the venice train* by georges simenon

how to print & bind this zine at home:

materials, programs, tools:

- 7 sheets of regular printer paper
- 3-4 new staples
- a pushpin, awl, or other tool to make a small hole
- adobe acrobat reader (free) or other PDF reader that can print in “booklet” mode
- optional: an x-acto knife, to trim the edges

instructions:

- open the zine PDF in acrobat. go to file > print. under “page sizing and handling,” choose “booklet.”
- the zine will appear to print in a jumbled-up way. take the sheets from the printer in exactly the order they were printed. if you fold the whole stack in half, you’ll notice that the pages are in order. don’t fold it yet, though!
- being careful to keep the sheets in order, fold each page individually (to get the best crease). you can use the blunt edge of a butter knife or a bone folder to crease it well.
- now we’re going to create the holes, where we’ll push in the staples to bind. you can be as precise as you like with this step; using a ruler to ensure that every staple is at an equal distance on every sheet, or just using the staples themselves as a measuring tool and eye-balling it. mark where the holes should go with a pencil. 3-4 staples along the crease should be enough.
- use a pushpin or awl to poke holes through each sheet. you can do this individually sheet-by-sheet, or use a binder clip to hold the sheets together and do them all at once.
- when all the holes are ready, align the holes of each sheet and press the staples through. feed the staples through the holes from the backs of the sheets, so that the prongs of the staple are on the inside of the crease. (the flat backs of the staples will be on the spine of your zine.)
- when staples are through all the sheets, use the blunt edge of a butter knife or a bone folder to fold down the prongs of each staple.
- fold the zine, and use the blunt edge on the spine crease a few times for good measure.
- optional: using a ruler and an x-acto knife, trim the uneven edges of the booklet.

